

What I Believe: Eight Tenets That Guide My Vision for the 21st Century Navy

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Last October I published my Guidance for 2006, in which I laid



What I Believe

Eight Tenets That Guide
My Vision For the **21st Century Navy**

Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Mullen, left, views maps of New Orleans, as the commanding officer of the *USS Tortuga* (LSD 46), Commander Mark Scovill, describes his ship's role in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

out a long-term vision for our Navy. I also provided some guiding principles and near-term objectives to help us achieve that vision. What follows here is what you didn't see in that document—the philosophical underpinnings and the rationale with which I wrote it.

I thought it important to share with you, the readers of *Proceedings*, my general view of the security environment in which we live and the important role I think sea power will inevitably play in shaping that environment.

This is not a discussion necessarily about programs or policies. It's not even wholly about specific operating concepts, tactics, or fiscal realities. It is an overview, a framework, if you will, with which we can attempt to make sense of the world around us, the challenges we face, and the demands on our time and resources.

My point is this: it is time to elevate the discussion of sea power. For far too long and in far too many ways, it has been about big-ship battles and high-tech weapons systems. Life is just not that simple anymore. The attack on the *USS Cole* was our tipping point.

We face entirely new challenges, the likes of which we couldn't even have imagined just a few short years ago. How we deal with those challenges will affect not only America's freedom, but also the freedom of millions of others—women and men—all over the world. We will still need traditional warfighting capabilities, of course, but given today's incredibly complex and dynamic threats, not to mention tomorrow's uncertainty, we must be capable of much, much more.

With that as preamble, and remembering we are already in a war, here are the eight central tenets upon which I built my

Guidance for 2006:

1. America is and will remain a maritime nation.

More than half of all Americans now live on or near a coast. Fully 95% of our imports and exports from outside North America travels by water and that volume is expected to double by 2020. In 2004 alone, the United States imported a record \$1.47 trillion worth of goods and exported nearly \$820 billion, also a record.

The American people expect the Navy to help protect that vital trade, not to mention their own safety and freedom of movement. They expect a Navy capable of safeguarding their sources of energy and access to the wealth of the oceans. In short, our nation's prosperity depends on unimpeded maritime commerce just as its security depends on continued maritime dominance.

The Navy, in partnership with joint forces and interagency efforts, continues to deliver that dominance. Whether spearheading Operation Enduring Freedom by providing sovereign deck space from which to launch the war in Afghanistan, continuing to support ground operations in Iraq from the sea, in the air, and on the land as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, patrolling the seas to interdict and deny access to terrorists and those whose designs are inimical to freedom, or shaping the maritime domain through swift humanitarian action in Indonesia or our own Gulf Coast, America's Navy provides unique and enduring operational options for the President and our combatant commanders.

2. We live in a challenging new era.

Our military is confronting a highly dynamic security environment far more complex, uncertain, and threatening than any we have faced before. While this is a time of promise and developing partnerships, it is also an era of irregular and increasingly unrestricted warfare. Our adversaries, unable and unwilling in some cases to match our technological warfighting advantage, will increasingly resort to whatever means are available to wreak havoc and destruction—physically, economically, and psychologically—unhindered and unconstrained by conscience or civilized norms.

To be effective in this environment, combatant commanders require tools that are not only instruments of war, but implements for stability, security, and reconstruction in our global neighborhood. Consider, for example, the international response to the devastating tsunami in Indonesia. For our part, in the Navy and Marine Corps, that response consisted of a carrier strike group and an expeditionary strike group—dozens of ships and helicopters and thousands of sailors and Marines, all collected and connected for one purpose: to save lives, provide security, and restore a sense of hope.

We literally built a city at sea for no other purpose than to serve the needs of other people. Aside from the lives we—along with our international partners—helped save, we started changing hearts and minds. We started showing them a side of American power that wasn't perceived as frightening, monolithic, or arrogant. We showed them American power—sea power—at its finest, and at its most noble.

I was struck by the results of a nationwide poll conducted two months later by a leading Indonesian pollster, Lembega Survei Indonesia. The poll found that, as a direct result of our humanitarian assistance—and for the first time ever in a Muslim nation—more people favored U.S.-led efforts to fight terrorism than opposed them (40% to 36%). Perhaps more critically, the poll also found that those who opposed U.S. efforts in the war on terror declined by half, from 72% in 2003 to just 36% in 2005. According to the group Terror Free Tomorrow, who commissioned the poll, it was a "stunning turnaround of public opinion" and demonstrates that "U.S. actions can make a significant and immediate difference in eroding the support base for global terrorists."

That was, in my view, one of the defining moments of this new century, and shame on us if, even through benign neglect, we allow those same opinions to turn against our best intentions again.

3. The Navy will remain rotational, forward deployed, and surge capable.

The Navy must be postured to win wars and defend the homeland, to empower our friends, and to help emerging





U.S. NAVY (BENJAMIN D. GLASS)

The faces of Indonesian children in a small Sumatran village greeting a helicopter from *USS Abraham Lincoln* (CVN-72) is evidence that U.S. humanitarian relief efforts in the wake of the December 2004 tsunami, spearheaded by the Navy, produced a stunning turnaround in public opinion about the United States.

partners who are struggling against the elements of instability—presence with a purpose.

Poor and mismanaged economies, the underdeveloped rule of law, systemic corruption, inadequate health systems, ethnic rivalry, and religious hatred all feed frustration, extremism, and terrorism. We must be able to continue to react quickly in times of humanitarian crises and with resolve in times of conflict. We must deter and dissuade potential adversaries in peacetime through persistent forward presence, and respond instantaneously in war by amassing overwhelming and lethal combat power. As we learned in Indonesia, and as we are seeing in the international relief efforts in earthquake-stricken Pakistan today, virtual presence is not the answer. You need to be there to make a difference.

To be effective in the multitude of missions that await us, the Navy must be capable of assuring access—at a time and place of our choosing—throughout the maritime domain. It is not enough that our sailors have the capacity to react instantly to actionable intelligence. They must develop a true understanding of the complex world in which they operate and the cultures with which they interact.

4. The level of international maritime cooperation will increase.

Not so very long ago, maritime security generally began and ended with national borders at the limits of our territorial waters. Nobody spoke of the threats from transnational networks, environmental attack, human trafficking, and failed states. Threats were well defined, and I would go so far as to say that maritime security was relatively simple. Those days are gone.

The cold truth is that these are just a few of today's challenges, shared by all maritime nations, that now flow almost seamlessly from the sea—over, around, and through our borders. The global maritime commons, as it is called, can now provide a venue through which both security and threats to that security pass freely and easily. Piracy, for example, can no longer be viewed as someone else's problem. It is a global threat to security because of its deepening ties to international criminal networks, smuggling of hazardous cargoes, and disruption of vital commerce.

Sea power, and the way international navies collectively wield it in the 21st century, must adapt. It will still require lethal warfighting capabilities, of course, but it must possess much, much more. Most significant, it will require global cooperation, interoperability, and an understanding of the nature of the threats we face. As Vice Admiral John Morgan and Rear Admiral Charles Martoglio put it in "The 1,000-Ship Navy" in the November issue of *Proceedings*, "Policing the maritime commons will require substantially more capability than the United States or any individual nation can deliver. It will take a combination of national, international, and private-industry cooperation to provide the platforms, people, and protocols necessary to secure the seas against the transnational threat."

As we build on existing alliances and cooperative efforts like the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Regional Maritime Security Initiative, we find that every nation has a stake in global security and stability, and a distinct, unique capability, as well as a great desire, to contribute. Our goal is to extend the peace through an inter-connected

community of maritime nations—a proverbial world navy of 1,000 ships—comprised of all freedom-loving nations, standing watch over the seas.



U.S. NAVY (BRADLEY J. SAPP)

The CNO sees the level of international cooperation increasing. During one of the largest international maritime exercises, RIMPAC 2004, Royal Australian Navy Able Seaman, Communications Specialist, Natalie Haumu retrieves a signal flag aboard the replenishment tanker HMAS Success as the ship begins to refuel USS John Paul Jones (DDG-53) in July 2004.

reward continuing education and training; institutionalize executive development; assign our best and brightest to critical joint, interagency, and foreign exchange tours; increase access to foreign language and cultural awareness training; respond rapidly to significant changes in leading indicators for recruiting and retention; and better recognize the important role families play in our readiness and quality of life. It is this commitment to our own that will best demonstrate our resolve and determination in a new era.

6. Calculating the size of the force demands balance between capabilities, capacity, and fiscal reality.

Perhaps no other challenge is as daunting right now for the Navy as that of defining future force structure, and then building to it. The calculus of force sizing includes the varied and sometimes competing requirements of homeland defense; the Global War on Terror; major combat operations; theater security cooperation; humanitarian assistance; peacekeeping operations and showing the flag—all within the constraints of fiscal responsibility, industrial capacity, and national infrastructure.

Tomorrow's Fleet will reap the benefits of a strong research-and-development program for shipbuilding and will be supported by a stable industrial base, robust enough to withstand natural disaster or catastrophic attack. We must align the industrial base for long-term force development through multi-year funding, advanced procurement, and incentives for cost savings. Sea Enterprise, our Navy's continuing effort to recapitalize, must remain an enabler to build ships more efficiently, cost effectively, and quickly.

7. The future Fleet will be larger and more capable.

It will have the capacity to overmatch any adversary. It will assure access and sustainability of the joint force in blue, green, and brown waters and include globally distributed and networked air, surface, and undersea

5. New opportunities and security challenges require new skills.

Our sailors must be empowered to operate and fight in a vast array of environments that range from failing states and ungoverned spaces to the most technologically advanced nations, virtual worlds, and cyberspace. They will be expected to understand and foster cooperation in cultures far different from our own. They will be ambassadors, educators, health care providers, mentors, and friends to a diverse cross-section of the global community. They must, therefore, be equipped with the tools and skills to meet these challenges and to develop as leaders.

They must also be supported by the right information at the right time—expanding maritime domain awareness throughout the global commons and the world's shallow waterways. In a world of growing global connectivity, the volume of information we are able to collect matters less than our ability to identify and understand what is important. Sailors must learn to recognize what matters, to comprehend the implications of the information they gather, and then act on it instantly, with the right capabilities.

To better serve them and, in turn, make them as effective as possible, we must: improve diversity; encourage and



capabilities, in partnership with the Marine Corps. The Fleet will also work more closely with the Coast Guard, as envisioned in the President's National Strategy for Maritime Security and the National Fleet Policy.

It will rely on joint seabasing that will provide for sustained air and ground anti-access operations in access-restricted environments. It will leverage both manned and unmanned technologies. And it will build



U.S. NAVY (WILLIAM POLSON)

The Coast Guard Cutter *Boutwell* (WMEC-719) leading the USS *Tarawa* (LHA-1) battle group in April 2003 exemplifies the Fleet working more closely with the Coast Guard.

on the foundation of FORCEnet, the operational model and architectural framework for future naval warfare that will integrate sailors, sensors, networks, command and control, platforms, and weapons into a networked, distributed combat force.

8. Sea Power 21 will remain the framework for our Navy's ongoing transformation.

I worked hard under my predecessor, Admiral Vern Clark, as one of Sea Power 21's principal architects. I believe in it and intend to use it.

Our Sea Strike capability will continue to be centered on carrier and expeditionary strike groups, with sufficient lift, sustainability, and tactical aviation assets to meet irregular and conventional joint warfighting requirements. Sea Basing will be facilitated by expeditionary warfare ships and connectors, heavy lift and transport aircraft, maritime prepositioning forces, and by the combat logistics force. Sea Shield capabilities, which are designed to extend naval defensive firepower far beyond the task force, will be enabled by advanced antisubmarine warfare and theater ballistic-missile defense technologies, and by a submarine fleet with a technological edge over all adversaries in warfighting, intelligence-gathering, detectability, and survivability. Further, the Fleet Response Plan and basing options will provide an adjustable rheostat to meet foreseeable forward-presence requirements.

Conclusion: The U.S. Navy in a New Era

It is impossible to foresee, or to fully comprehend, all the challenges of the future. We have entered an era of uncertainty. But by building a balanced force that is resilient and adaptable, with the depth of capabilities required to meet the demands of a multi-mission, multi-task environment, we can mitigate this uncertainty. We must assess the risks and successfully manage them.

The Navy cannot meet the threats of tomorrow by simply maintaining today's readiness and requirements. Our adversaries will not rest, our global neighbors will not wait. Neither will we. Building on Sea Power 21, we must continue to transform, recapitalize, and modernize for the future without jeopardizing our current readiness and the strides we have made—and continue to make—in personnel and manpower management.

With our partners in industry, the acquisition community, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, other governmental and non-governmental agencies, and with the continuing support of the Congress, the Navy will build a force that is properly sized, balanced, and priced for tomorrow.

As Admiral John B. Nathman makes clear in the article that follows, *Shaping the Future*, American sea power in the 21st century is the projection of power—and more. It extends beyond the sea. It is joint and interagency. It requires awareness and understanding. It enables access and cooperation. It provides for presence and interaction. It is driven by compassion and collective security. And it is decisive and lethal. It is and must be wielded by American sailors as a force both for war and for peace.

I think Admiral Raymond Spruance had it just about right when he defined sea power as "pushing our front lines as far forward as possible." A naval force floating off the continental shelf with no impact on shore is not decisive. We must

go forward to the very reaches of the sea, operating effectively in every part of the littoral and beyond. That is the debate I am eager to have, and that is the level to which I want the discussion raised.

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